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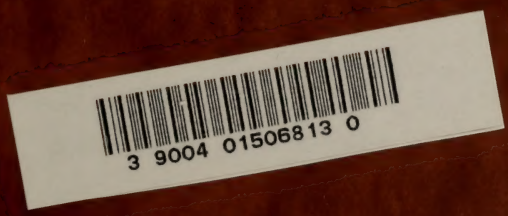

BLAMING IT ON VALCARTIER

The Tory Toronto "Telegram" tells of Canada's Big War Training Camp under Tory Management

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BUT—What had Valcartier to do with Bad Boots?

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Blaming Valcartier

The Toronto Telegram, anxious to shield the Borden Government as much as possible, has hit upon the ingenious argument that "Valcartier camp is responsible for most of the troubles the war has brought upon Sir Robert Borden." In its issue of March 17, the Telegram says:

> **"Valcartier was a sink hole for this country's money. Valcartier was the scene of absolutely wasted weeks in the lives of this country's soldiers. Valcartier was the principal reason why the equipment of the soldiers with clothing and boots, especially boots, was a rush job. The soldiers had to be equipped so that they could leave Valcartier before the weather became too cold. Consequently the Militia Department had no ability and the manufacturers had no time."**

The first disposition was to put all the blame on the makers of the shoes. What blame there was on the part of particular manufacturers has come out in the evidence given before the committee of inquiry ordered by Parliament. But this excuse has had the bad effect of advertising to the world the wrong and injurious statement that our manufacturers cannot make good shoes. Everybody knows they can. Everybody knows they do it all the year round. Everybody knows they use exactly the same perfected machinery that is used all over the continent and in Europe.

The manufacturers made the shoes that were ordered. If the wrong sort were ordered, the fault lay with the Government. And that is where the fault did lie. They waited three weeks, during which they might have called together men in the shoe trade who

could have told them what was needed, but did not avail themselves of that advice. Then they ordered shoes suited for Sunday wear in June weather, and insisted on getting them delivered in a rush. And now the Telegram is trying to explain that having equipped the soldiers with nice light Sunday shoes, the mistake was made of sending the men to Valcartier. It says:

> **"Even the mischief making powers of Hon. Sam Hughes were enlarged by the possibilities of Valcartier. The men had to be rushed away from Valcartier lest they should be driven out by the severity of the weather."**

The Telegram further claims that

> **"Canada's soldiers went out from Valcartier in September, ill shod and untrained, in the sense that the time which should have carried these soldiers a long way towards the goal of efficiency was wasted in marching past and other exercises more suitable to the rehearsals of a comic opera company than to the mobilization of an army."**

As to the value of the training, opinions may differ, but about ordering light Sunday city shoes for thirty odd thousand men, who were to do all this marching in the open country, there can be only one opinion. The brand of incompetence is upon those responsible for it, and calling out "Valcartier" in loud and angry voices will not help them.

The real inwardness of the Telegram's feeling on the subject is perhaps sufficiently shown by the following paragraph from the same article:

> **"The Borden Government may survive, but the country should not be called upon to tolerate the further misuse of Valcartier as a stage setting for the greatness of Hon. Sam Hughes. Does Sir Robert Borden propose to retain his present Minister of Militia? Then the least that Sir Robert Borden can do is to keep Hon. Sam**

Hughes in Ottawa. If men must be mobilized at Valcartier, let them stay there and learn the essentials of the soldier's trade under the instruction of officers whose wisdom is drawn from more modern sources of truth than experiences in the South African war. The interests of Canada and the prosperity of the Borden Government demand that Hon. Sam Hughes recede into the background of a resignation from office or a permanent withdrawal from the specialties of his performance as the war lord of Valcartier."

The "Borden Government may survive," in other words, if all its other members can get people to make scapegoats of General Hughes and Valcartier, perish Hughes, perish Valcartier, if only "the Borden Government may survive."

Which do YOU want?

BORDEN TAXES—with Graft and Waste

or

LAURIER PROSPERITY—and Efficient Administration

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